

ORCUTT

Union School District

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November 13, 1996

Honorable Reed E. Hundt, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Hundt:

Labor Secretary Robert Reich's number one career tip to the members of our future workforce recently headlined in a page one article in the Wall Street Journal and is a powerful statement by its very simplicity. To the millions of young people leaving school this year he advised:

"Whether you work in an office or manage a crew that cleans it, you must be computer literate."

To me, the implications are quite clear—our schools must integrate technology into the delivery of the curriculum just as technology is integrated into the work place. This also is the philosophy of the Orcutt School District in our approach to assisting our students to become computer literate.

Accordingly, we have been on the forefront of technology applications for the past seven years. During this past year, for example, we have worked closely with State Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin in developing the Challenge Initiative. We have also worked very closely with the IBM Corporation and have developed excellent business partnerships in our own community, a partnership with the Riordan Foundation, and with our local cable carrier, Comcast. Our district has advanced to the point where all of our schools are wired. Additionally, our fiber optic wide area network linking all of our schools together should be up and running during this coming summer. Since all of our classrooms now have at least one computer, and most have four computers and a printer, we are now reviewing the richness of information available from the Internet.

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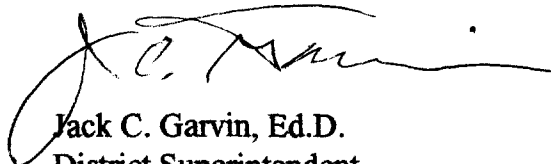
Now, enter the frustration when I contacted long distance carriers namely AT&T, MCI, and Sprint, and discovered the cost of a T-1 line connection. The lowest quote thus far is \$1,900 a month from AT&T. Purely by coincidence we had made arrangements to visit the state of

Texas during the month of April 1996. I was interested in the Allen School District's use of the Internet, and the Yselta School District's applications of their fiber optic wide area network. During the visit to Yselta, I discussed with their technology director HB 2128 legislation passed by the Texas Legislature in 1995. I realize that you may have also reviewed this legislation. Suddenly I found myself face to face with a major inconsistency concerning the availability of low cost, high speed transmission of data into schools, libraries, and other non-profit organizations in Texas as opposed to what is offered in California. By the passage of HB 2128, Texas has limited the cost of a T-1 line, for instance, to \$260 per month as opposed to AT&T's quote of \$1900 per month in California.

HB 2128 makes the point that public utilities are by definition monopolies in the areas they serve, therefore, normal forms of competition which operate to regulate prices in a free enterprise society do not operate, therefore, making it necessary for legislative acts such as HB 2128 to be placed on the books. What will it take to lower the cost of a T-1 line?

I believe we will need a concerted effort led by highly placed elected and appointed public officials such as yourself to get the ball rolling. I am very interested in your response to this letter and recommendations from your point of view of what it will take to replicate what Texas has accomplished on behalf of its citizens. Thank you for this opportunity to communicate with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jack C. Garvin", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jack C. Garvin, Ed.D.
District Superintendent
Orcutt Union School District

JCG/am

ORCUTT

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